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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SIGNS DECREE TO PERMIT GOVERNMENT
RESTRUCTURING

¶1. (SBU) On December 6, Finance Minister Ousmane Dore announced on public radio that President Lansana Conte had signed the pending decree authorizing Prime Minister Lansana Kouyate to restructure the central government. Dore confirmed this development in a meeting with the Ambassador on December 7 (to be reported septel), but other GoG contacts were hesitant to comment on the decree since it had not been officially promulgated. The December 10 edition of the government-owned newspaper Horoya commented on Minister Dore's announcement and questioned why the decree had not yet been posted. Finally, on December 12, a local private internet news station (Guinea 24) posted the entire text of the decree online and announced that it had officially been signed by President Conte while Horoya printed a special edition on December 13 publishing the decree.

¶2. (U) The decree gives Prime Minister Kouyate the authority to restructure ministries within his administration as well as to replace appointed government officials below the ministerial level.

COMMENT

¶3. (SBU) Kouyate has waited several months for this decree, the lack of which has hampered his administration's ability to implement much needed reforms. At the same time, a carte blanche replacement of key government officials could backfire by creating a significant political opposition both within and outside the government. Strategic, targeted restructuring efforts that balance the need to maintain cohesion while advancing reforms are likely to be more effective. END COMMENT.

CARTER